

Federal Aid



Program Description and Mission

The Division of Federal Aid works with state fish and wildlife agencies in a mutually responsible, cooperative and creative grant partnership to protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and habitat resources for present and future public benefit.

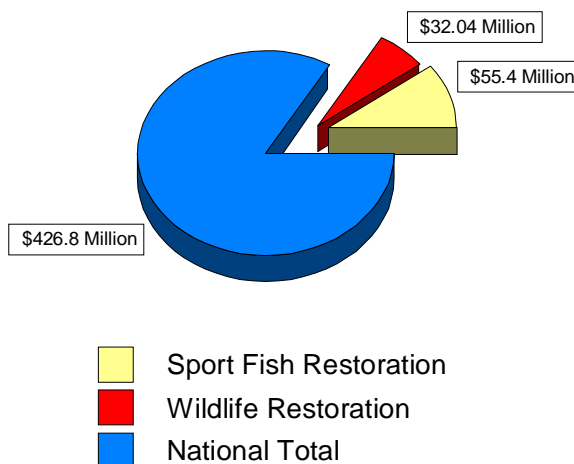
The major grant programs, Sport Fish Restoration enacted into law in 1950 and Wildlife Restoration passed by Congress in 1937, are recognized nationwide for the positive impact they have had on the quality of habitat and species management and the efficiency of program administration.

The States use the Federal Aid grants, which accounts for one-fourth to one-third of their respective fish and wildlife management budgets, for work across the full spectrum of their management responsibilities. In Fiscal Year 1998, the eight states of Region 3 received more than \$32 million (\$32,044,396) in Wildlife Restoration grant funds, and more than \$55 million (\$55,468,342) in Sport Fish Restoration grant funds for a total of \$87,512,738. This amount represents 20.5 percent of the national total.

Region 3's Federal Aid Division also administers grants under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act, the Anadromous Fish Conservation Act (currently inactive), the Partnerships for Wildlife Program, Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, and the Clean Vessel Act.

Regional Share of National Federal Aid Funds

Of more than \$426 million of Sport Fish Restoration and Wildlife Restoration funds distributed nationally in Fiscal Year 1998, more than \$87.5 million (more than 20 percent of the national total) went to states in Region 3 — \$55.4 million for Sport Fish Restoration grants, 32.04 million in Wildlife Restoration grants.



Summary of Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments

Of the nation's 28 funded Partnerships for Wildlife projects, 11 belonged to Region 3.

Federal Aid continued its work with the States of Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Illinois in the audit cycle. The audits are an important and integral part of Federal Aid. They ensure that rules and laws are followed as defined by Congress and the American public. We take great pride in working with States in ensuring compliance.

Federal Aid also filled vacancies in its staff. Jon Parker, Herb Conley, Lois Lawson and Shirley Karmen were added as wildlife biologists, lands administrator and administrative officer, respectively. Federal Aid also took a new approach to its human resource needs, adding a Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) appointment, Julie Morin. Through her experience and education we will begin looking at our program and mission from both traditional, and business perspectives.

Of the nation's 28 funded Partnerships for Wildlife projects, 11 belonged to Region 3. That's 34 percent of Region 3's total dollars. Funds provided through these projects helped fund 29 percent of Wisconsin's and five percent of Ohio's total dollars were funded. Projects include habitat management for prairie chickens, prairies, savannas, oak woodlands, and trout stream, aquatic insect cataloging, prairie invertebrate distribution and response to management, bat study, osprey study, effects of rotational grazing on grassland birds and stream quality, and native plant seed program. Two shooting ranges in Chippewa County and Marshfield, Wisconsin were completed. The ranges also were completed in cooperation with private partners - the county sheriffs department and city police department.

The Division of Federal Aid provided valuable input for a software-based hunter education product. *Responsible Hunting* is a CD-ROM product developed by Top Hook, Inc. in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The compact disk is not intended to qualify a person to engage in hunting, or to purchase a hunting license, but provides students information useful in preparation for a hunter education course. The supplemental information allows instructors more time for hands-on training.

Federal Aid provided input to Silvertip Productions, Ltd. and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) who are partnering to develop information packets about shooting ranges. The three-part project will include a guide for developing shooting ranges, a case history brochure that provides shooting range strategic guidance to state agencies, and a Range Guidance Manual which includes information on compliance, public relations and technical studies.

***In order to better
serve the needs of our
partners and
customers, the
Federal Aid Division
surveyed attendees at
the National
Wildlife Refuge
Conference in
Keystone, Colorado.***

Federal Aid also completed several projects as part of its Regional Outreach Plan. The Division created and printed new vinyl graphics for a trailer which houses our SAFETY (Simulated Action Firearms Training for Youth) system. Articles describing Region 3's hunter education program, and use of SAFETY is being written for the Service's *Fish and Wildlife News* and *Hunter Education Journal*. Federal Aid also developed and implemented a direct mail campaign to send Clean Vessel information to marina owners and operators. The information was also incorporated into Quimby's Cruising Guide, a publication sent to more than 15,000 customers annually, covering 7,924 river miles. The Division also created a new display, "The Cycle of Success, " to help communicate our message to new audiences.

In order to better serve the needs of our partners and customers, Federal Aid Division surveyed attendees at the National Refuge Conference in Keystone, Colorado. The survey provided the Division with knowledge of what our internal partners know about our programs. Many surveys were returned with suggestions to improve our communications efforts. The Division also participated in and partnered with several organizations during events such as the 50th Anniversary National Hunter Education Conference in Buffalo, New York, Shot Show, Boat Show, and Duck Habitat Days.

Division staff developed and conducted grant training to state agencies in Michigan. The training was part of our efforts to improve grant training for all states in Region 3. The training was also an opportunity to understand what questions were of our program and specifically grant administration and to work together to solve any problems. Also, in terms of grants and their administration, last year we worked on grants that purchased over 7,000 acres of which the Federal portion amounted to \$3,866,622. Our lands year and reporting requirements won't be completed until February or March, so we look forward to an equal or ever increasing land acquisition program.

Our field reviews increased this year. Reviews for compatible use and Section 7 compliance associated with various non-wildlife related/dependent recreational use continue. The Division uses a team approach in conducting field reviews. This approach allows for multiple disciplines and perspectives to complex issues.

In Fiscal Year 1998, The Division of Federal Aid, completed two, 504 post-award compliance audits of the states of Iowa and Indiana. We plan to double our efforts in Fiscal Year 1999. We have also increased our participation at Ecosystem meetings, offering the "Federal Aid" perspective while actively serving as an ecosystem partner.

Region 3 is also contributing to a new national Federal Aid Information Management System (FAIMS). FAIMS is the only system used for Federal Aid grants, outreach, and any other identified information needed nationally. It is a complicated system requiring many hours in development and coordination.

Outreach

Outreach is an important tool for Federal Aid Division. Outreach efforts increase awareness of Federal Aid programs, and helps show how funds are used. The public's lack of awareness threatens the long term viability of the Program. Federal Aid can improve awareness and understanding through outreach to target audiences at the national, regional, and state levels.

Target audiences include state fish and wildlife agencies, firearms, ammunition archery, boating and fishing tackle manufacturers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, news media, the non-segmented general public, hunting and fishing public, marinas and boaters. During Fiscal Year 1998, Federal Aid accomplished the following outreach efforts:

State Fish and Wildlife Agencies

- Development of a SAFETY logo and printing of this logo and other messages on a trailer. This trailer now becomes a moving billboard. It is also a catalyst that will evolve into a story for the FWS News and Hunter Education Journal about Federal Aid's work regarding Hunter Education and our efforts to assist the States with funding this activity.

Manufacturers

Conducted follow-up with trade show contacts—

- Letters sent out to each contact
- Product Research of Companies that could be potential partners
- Identify priority industries to target
- Input accomplishments into the Region 3 Accomplishment Reporting System
- Get on agenda and prepare a presentation for Regional Biologists Conference
- Set up poster display at conference, Cycle of Success display and video, and St. Joseph River Video if possible
- Identify and highlight Federal Aid success stories both with Regional Office staff and States.
- Coordinate with States, External Affairs, and GEO Outreach Specialists, with news releases and other outreach
- Work with External Affairs to prepare press releases on Federal Aid program and projects

- Survey Refuge staff to understand perceptions and awareness of program
- Develop a Region 3 pop-up (Nomadic) display
- Examine and evaluate other regional displays (Region 1, Region 7)
- Modify others, or design new display
- Share with Region 3 States

Marinas

- Direct mail 3 large and 3 small pumpout signs and request audience to display them. If they don't have a pumpout, have them return card for information on our pumpout grant program.
 - A list is compiled from database of Standard Industry Codes for Marina Owner/Operators
 - Invite audience to respond (telephone us or return a card) if they are not aware of the CVA and grants available from the government for the construction and/or renovation, operation and maintenance of pumpout stations
 - Research next Mayors meeting and develop appropriate materials
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Goals for Fiscal Year 1999

- Improve our grant process and completion of them in a timely manner;
 - Work in partnerships with State fish and wildlife agencies in a mutually responsible, cooperative and creative manner to protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and habitat resources for present and future public benefit.
 - Work towards implementation of FAIMS
 - Improve our outreach efforts
 - Provide training in grant writing
 - Conduct field reviews
 - Conduct 504 Realty reviews and desk audits
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Federal Aid Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments

Direct Mail Effort Targets Mississippi River Basin

Federal Aid

A total of 270 direct mail folders were sent this summer to owners and operators of marinas on the Upper Mississippi, St. Croix, Ohio, Tennessee, Muskingum, and Kentucky Rivers by the Service's Region 3 Division of Federal Aid. The rivers form a large part of the Mississippi River Basin. Each folder contained general information regarding grants from the Clean Vessel Act (CVA) re-authorization that are available for pumpout installation. The effort involved creating a postcard size mailer that can be mailed back to State CVA coordinators for more information regarding the program. It also contained both small and large pumpout signs to be posted when pumpouts are available. The Service targeted waterways that crossed multiple state boundaries, and where a regional approach was appropriate. Many states have exhausted all interested marina's on the Great Lakes, making the Region's major rivers a logical next step. The effort also compliments other Mississippi River Basin partnership activities. Approaching the clean water issue locally and regionally was successful by focusing on collaboration between the Service, State Clean Vessel Coordinators, marina operator/owners and boaters. Funding for the CVA grants comes from a federal excise tax collected on all gasoline sales attributed to boaters. Hence, the boaters help pay for the solution to the problem that they have created. It is hoped that these same boaters and anglers will eventually become allies in efforts to clean up other pollution sources on the rivers. The use of pumpouts by boaters is pivotal in ensuring our waterway's are clean and waterfowl and fish have quality habitats. **7/98**

Illinois Evaluates Best Management Practices on Watershed Fish Habitat

Federal Aid

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has started a Sport Fish Restoration project in partnership with the state's Conservation 2000 initiative. The project will evaluate the affects of using Best Management Practices (BMP) in pilot watersheds on sport fish populations, growth, and habitat. The study will continue

through 2002. The Service is providing the Illinois Department of Natural Resources 75-percent of the funds for the BMP evaluations via the Sport Fish Restoration Grant program. The Sport Fish Restoration Grant program provides approximately \$40 million per year to states in Region 3 for fisheries management. Conservation 2000 Initiative is an Illinois program that demonstrates the economic and environmental benefits of using best management practices (BMP's) in numerous pilot watersheds. The results of the evaluation will enable Illinois and other Region 3 states to show the benefits of watershed BMP's to sport fish resources. **7/98**

Service Training Helps Michigan Obtain \$13 Million For Sport Fish, Wildlife Restorations

Federal Aid

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Federal Aid recently conducted a federal grant writing and administration training workshop for members of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Twelve members from Michigan Department of Natural Resources's Divisions of Wildlife, Fisheries, Law Enforcement, and Parks and Recreation attended the three-day training, hosted by the Service's East Lansing Field Office. The training was tailored specifically to Michigan's needs and included complete student manuals and visual aids as well as instruction in the preparation of grant documents to obtain Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Grants totaling nearly \$13 million. The training also enhanced interaction, trust and cooperation among the various divisions of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and between the DNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. During recent years, both the Michigan DNR and Region 3 Federal Aid office have undergone restructuring and downsizing, including major changes in personnel. The changes created some misunderstandings in both organizations about the grants process. The training workshop resolved those misunderstandings while improving the working relationship between the Service and Michigan DNR. **8/98**

Service Involved in Wisconsin's Strategic Plan for Fish and Wildlife Resources

Federal Aid Office

The Federal Aid Program Funding Option (accountable block grant) has provided a means for the Service's Federal Aid program to help the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to retain the integrity of their comprehensive management system for managing the State's fish and wildlife resources, in the face of major restructuring and effort to do integrated ecosystem management on a watershed basis. Currently, the Service's Federal Aid Office is encouraging the Department to pursue basic evaluations and revisions in their strategic planning in order to retain their accountable block grant. The extra incentive of the grant is making it possible for managers to direct some agency focus to revise their comprehensive goals and objectives while providing for local based project development.

Sportfish Funds Buy 7,026 Acres in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio

Federal Aid

A total of 7,026.65 acres were bought by the States of Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio using Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration grant monies administered by the Division of Federal Aid. **12/97**

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